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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 WARSAW 001188

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SUBJECT: GAERC - POLISH VIEWS ON OCTOBER 13 EU FOREIGN
MINISTERS MEETING

REF: STATE 108064

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR DAN SAINZ FOR REASONS
1.4 (B) AND (D)

11. (C) SUMMARY: MFA European Correspondent Cyryl Kozaczewski told us October 9 that while Belarusian elections were flawed and there has been no significant improvement in terms of democracy and human rights, Poland will support a temporary suspension of the travel ban. The ban should be lifted, in the GoP view, for most Belarusian officials, including Lukashenka, but not those "with blood on their hands." Poland plans to raise the need for more coordination between the U.S. and EU on sanctions at the GAERC. Assuming Russia withdraws its forces from "areas adjacent" to South Ossetia and Abkhazia by October 10, Poland will press other Member States to characterize the development as an important first step, not complete fulfillment of Russian commitments. Poland remains concerned about balancing Russia's growing influence in Uzbekistan and plans to endorse a partial relaxation of sanctions, to include lifting the travel ban while maintaining the arms embargo. On Zimbabwe, Poland supports maintaining sanctions until real change takes place. In the meantime, the EU should continue to provide humanitarian assistance. END SUMMARY.

BELARUS

12. (C) On Belarus, Kozaczewski said there is strong consensus among Member States that more EU engagement is needed. Although the September 28 elections were flawed and there has been no significant improvement in terms of democracy and human rights, most Member States see other "positive signs" -- e.g., release of political prisoners -- that merit a partial softening of sanctions. Kozaczewski said Poland supports a six-month suspension of the travel ban for most Belarusian officials -- including Lukashenka -- but not for "those with blood on their hands." When poloff stressed the importance of a measured response, Kozaczewski argued that maintaining the visa ban on Lukashenka would be "counterproductive" and might drive him closer to Moscow. The goal is to reduce, not increase, Russian influence.

13. (C) GAERC conclusions will include a post-election evaluation that identifies "areas for improvement" and will outline steps the EU is willing to take in exchange for improvements on human rights and democratization. The conclusions will also recommend that the EU Troika meet with Belarusian FM Martynov. Kozaczewski said Poland agrees that there should be more coordination between the U.S. and EU on sanctions and plans to raise this at the GAERC. (NOTE: DCM also stressed the need for closer U.S.-EU coordination on

Belarus sanctions in an October 7 discussion with MFA
Political Director Witold Sobkow. END NOTE.)

GEORGIA

14. (C) Kozaczewski said Poland would stress respect for Georgia's territorial integrity at the GAERC. In the event Russia complies with the October 10 deadline on withdrawal from "adjacent areas," Poland will press other EU Member States to characterize the development as an important first step, rather than as complete fulfillment of Russian commitments. "We must do this calmly, without exuberance," he stated. Poland will press for language emphasizing the EU's position that the EU Monitoring Mission covers all of Georgia, including Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and calling for Russian withdrawal to pre-August 7 positions. Poland also plans to raise the October 8 ambush of EU monitors by irregular forces. If such attacks occur repeatedly, Kozaczewski said, the mission's mandate will have to be adjusted to reflect reality. Kozaczewski said no final decision had been made concerning Poland's contribution at the October 15 donors conference.

15. (C) Kozaczewski said Poland views the EU's renewed focus on its Eastern neighbors as a positive development, despite the unfortunate factors that prompted the attention shift. He pointed out the irony that the October 15 European Council will focus primarily on Eastern Policy (Georgia, Moldova, and the Polish-Swedish Eastern Partnership proposal), given the French Presidency's initial focus on the Mediterranean. "It seems reality caught up with the French," he added.

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UZBEKISTAN

16. (C) On Uzbekistan, Kozaczewski said the broader context of EU engagement in Georgia and Belarus required the EU to re-think its approach to Uzbekistan. With its new focus on the eastern neighbors, the EU cannot engage selectively but must look at the region as a whole. Poland believes Uzbek authorities have displayed a willingness to engage in dialogue. Kozaczewski said Poland remains concerned about balancing Russia's growing influence in Uzbekistan and, as a result, will endorse a partial relaxation of sanctions, to include lifting the travel ban while maintaining the arms embargo for another 12 months.

ZIMBABWE

17. (C) Kozaczewski said Poland welcomed the September 15 power-sharing agreement in Zimbabwe, but stressed that the agreement's implementation is far more important. To date, the outcomes have not been satisfactory. Poland supports maintaining sanctions until real change takes place. The true test will be Tsvangirai's empowerment. In the meantime, the EU should continue to provide humanitarian and other financial support in order to promote stability. A minimum level of engagement is needed to maintain influence over Mugabe's behavior.

ASHE